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100 Years

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100 YEARS

This month the ANNALS OF IOWA is celebrating its 100th birthday. Since the first issue came into being on January, 1863, the magazine has undergone many changes which reflect the philosophies of its various editors.

The ANNALS was first published at Iowa City by the State Historical Society. Its first editor was the Reverend Samuel Storrs Howe. In 1893 it was moved to Des Moines and became part of the then newly organized State Department of History and has so remained.

Though there are numerous magazines dealing with Iowa history, the ANNALS is the only one which is officially owned by the state. Throughout its 100 years of publication, it has served a most useful purpose to all Iowans in making available in print, large quantities of valuable, historical information about Iowa which would not ordinarily be published, therefore stimulating a state and nationwide interest and appreciation of Iowa.

Rev. Howe in Vol. 1, No. 1 of the Annals stated, regarding the then occurring Civil War:

“. . . here, on American soil, is to be settled forever—the great principle, that a free, popular constitutional Government can defend itself against domestic traitors, as it has done against foreign foes. Already the nations of Europe have begun to learn a lesson of warfare from this national struggle, **which will change the deadly implements of carnage for those more defensive or offensive than were ever before invented.** So that civil war, and all war, will hereafter be a terrible venture, that men of ambition and blood will scarcely dare to try.

“In this conflict for national life and liberty, against domestic enemies, the State of Iowa has embarked, from first to last, with fifty thousand picked men as volunteers. Their blood has flowed like water on the battle fields of Springfield, Blue Hills, Belmont, Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Iuka, Corinth, Arkansas Post and Vicksburg; and wherever, in the Southwest, the fight has been the fiercest, Iowa men have been foremost in the assault. The annals of Iowa soldiers alone would make a library, and the trophies of Iowa troops would fill a cabinet of no small dimensions.

"It is therefore most fit, that some pages of current events, illustrative of the character of a people so brave and patriotic, should be recorded, for the benefit of future generations. Well have the enemies of the Union, made captive by our citizen soldiers, exclaimed: 'Where is that Iowa, from which come so many soldiers, who fight so bravely?'

"Iowa was made a Territory, separate from Wisconsin, so recently as the fourth of July, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-eight; and, by the adoption of a Constitution, and election of a Governor, with other officers, and a Legislature in August, of the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and forty-six, was fully inaugurated on the third of December following, as a sovereign state.

"Shall not such a state, already grown so great, have a history? And will anyone say that its authentic Annals are too soon begun, or that the aid of the intelligent citizens of this commonwealth has been invoked too soon, to fill the Library and Cabinet of the Historical Society, connected as it is with the State University?

"In troublous times, these Annals of the Society are begun. Yet humble reliance may be reposed on the God of history, unfolding leaf after leaf in his continual providence that ruleth over all. He only can prosper all honest endeavors, and send a brighter day in our country's history. With such a trust, this humble publication is begun, relating to a State, already illustrious in arms; but destined of high Heaven, it is confidently hoped, to be still more illustrious, when arms shall yield to peace and prosperity throughout the whole land."

The times have changed, yet the words of Reverend Howe still hold true. So it is with the ANNALS. Physically it has gone through various modifications over the past century, yet its purpose remains the same. This purpose, free from the limitations and pressures of time, will undoubtedly continue unaltered for another 100 years.

So now, as it was at the birth of the magazine, ". . . it is confidently hoped, to be still more illustrious, when arms shall yield to peace and prosperity throughout the whole land."

THE EDITOR

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